

The Wisdom of the East Series Vol. 46.

EDITED BY

L. CRANMER-BYNG

Dr. S. A. KAPADIA

LOTUSES OF THE MAHĀYĀNA

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vol. 46

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WISDOM OF THE EAST

# LOTUSES OF THE MAHĀYĀNA

EDITED BY  
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"THE HEART OF BUDDHISM"  
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## INTRODUCTION

THE followers of Sākyamuni began, soon after his death in 483 B.C., to differ both as to his person and as to some of his teachings. But these differences did not greatly divide them until about the beginning of the Christian Era, when a liberal movement set in and became strong enough to form a separate and very vigorous sect. Criticising the more austere schools as a Narrow Way, (Hinayāna), which might lead a few detached and rather inhuman saints to the goal of Nirvāna, these liberals called their own way Mahāyāna, or the Great Way which leads many to salvation. This liberal Buddhism is stigmatised alike by the monks of Ceylon and Burma, and by many of their Western students, as an illegitimate development: it is quite different, they argue, from the Dhamma of Sākyamuni. He taught men to rely upon their own efforts, and they make much of faith in divine beings; he taught the ideal of the Arhat, or recluse, and they criticise this as selfish, and set up in its place that of the Bodhisattva, who will not rest until he has brought many to salvation. To these criticisms the

champions of Mahāyāna reply that it is a mark of the living organism to develop, that the Orthodox may perhaps claim to keep the letter of the Dhamma but that they have certainly lost its spirit, and that their rigidity is a sign of atrophy. The student who is not a Buddhist will leave these two great schools to settle this dispute for themselves. Yet, if he is a sympathetic student, he may see truth in both positions. Even if the Mahāyāna is very different from the moral reform movement which swept India in the sixth century before Christ, its meaning and motive-power lay chiefly in the admirable figure of Sākyamuni, and he was himself Bodhisattva as well as Arhat. Moreover, he claimed an authority for his teaching and a faith in it which, even in his own lifetime, began to cling with the tendrils of human affection and loyalty to his person. There are, in a word, seeds in early Buddhism which developed by a natural growth into the fine flower of the Mahāyāna (Part I). Thus we find a characteristic utterance of the Pāli books, "Whoso seeth the Dhamma seeth Me," developing quite naturally into the semi-docetism of the Mahāyāna :

Whoso saw My mortal form,  
Whoso heard My spoken word—  
Heard and saw not—in the Norm  
See the Body of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

Another natural development was to relate the

<sup>1</sup> *Vajracchedikā Sūtra* (third century A.D.)

historic Sākyamuni to the Eternal, and to build up an elaborate Buddhology. The great man condemns the world to the task of explaining him. In the same way the emphasis placed by Sākyamuni upon the fleeting and universal nature of worldly possessions—"All is transient and empty of abiding worth"—develops almost inevitably into a transcendentalism which is of the essence of the Mahāyāna :

Thus shall ye think of all this fleeting world :  
A star at dawn, a bubble on a stream,  
A flash of lightning on a summer cloud,  
A flickering lamp, a phantom and a dream.<sup>1</sup>

This transcendentalism in turn led to nihilistic views : "All is empty not only of real worth, not only of abiding reality, but of any reality whatsoever."

A flower in air,  
A hornèd hare,  
A sculptured maid with child :  
False fancies all and figments wild  
Of the untutored common mind  
Which seeketh still a self to find. . . .  
Infatuate they transmigrate,  
Whom still their own delusion blinds  
And to the wheel of Karma binds.<sup>2</sup>

However they may differ in philosophical interpretation, all these schools claim the Master's authority and the goal remains the same for

<sup>1</sup> *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (second century A.D.).

<sup>2</sup> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* (fourth century A.D.).

all. "One thing only . . . the uprooting of sorrow . . . Nirvāna," said Sākyamuni: and all Buddhists are agreed that this is the essence of Buddhism. To this end even nihilism is made to contribute:

If I that sing am nothing, nothing they  
I see around me—men and things—then pray  
How shall I fail in mind to press  
To that One Goal of Nothingness?

sings Akazome Emon, a Japanese poet.

Even extreme forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism claim, then, to be legitimate: and all claim our attention. The true nature of a religion is best understood by studying its complex developments as well as its simpler beginnings, and examples will be found of these varying philosophical schools in Nos. VI, IX, XIX, XX, XXI.

Moreover, it is by no means clear that we get the pure essence of what Sākyamuni was and taught in the books of the Orthodox. These were written not less than four hundred years after his death, and are at best the interpretation of his person and teachings by monks who had lost that first contagion of enthusiasm which made his religion a popular movement. That they give one possible interpretation is clear; but even they seem to hesitate whether to content themselves with thinking of him as the "Honoured Elder Brother of the World," supernatural but not supernatural, or to go on and claim for him



the high title of "God among the gods." They themselves, moreover, make it clear that he set forth both in example and in teaching the compassionate ideal of the Bodhisattva, and made great demands upon the faith of his disciples. It is clear that the seeds of moral reformation which he sowed were sown upon Indian soil (Part II), and germinated accordingly; and the Mahāyāna may from this point of view be regarded as a Hinduism purified and reformed. As the plants which germinated upon this pantheistic soil were transplanted to Kashmir, Chinese Turkestan, and the Far East they developed according to these new environments, and the process has of late been vividly brought home to us by the discoveries of the Stein and Pelliot expeditions. In these treasures of early Buddhist art we see graphically how the Indian religion was adapted to suit China and her neighbours; and we realise vividly how great a cultural bond the Mahāyāna formed. This little anthology seeks in a popular way to illustrate some of its great ideals.

In the first few poems we get a glimpse of the pantheistic soil upon which early Buddhism grew, and of some of the authentic teachings of Sākya-muni, which later became the germs of liberal Buddhism; and these in turn are followed by a selection from the lotus-ponds of the Mahāyāna. They represent a notable contribution from

Buddhist scholars to India's long search after Reality.

From the unreal lead me to the Real,  
From darkness to Light,  
From death to Immortality :

this has been Indian's age-long prayer, and the scholars of Mahāyāna claim, like their Master, to have found an answer to it. Whether they define this Goal with him as Nirvāna, as Tathatā or Suchness, as Sūnyatā or the Void, or more theologically as the Dharmakāya, or Body of the Law, and Tathāgatagarbha or Buddha-womb, they all claim to be his followers and to have reached the same ultimate Reality.

Some of the flowers of the lotus here presented blossomed upon Chinese and others upon Japanese soil, but they are all sprung from the authentic parent stock, and the student will find that they are of the same species.

It will be noted how great a part Faith plays in the Mahāyāna (Nos. V, XXII, XXIII), that this Faith did not confine itself to the historic teacher, or even to his glorified manifestation (Nos. I, XLI, XLII), but that it called into being a notable pantheon in which Amitābha, Lord of the Western Paradise, the compassionate Avalokitesvara, and other charming figures provide a satisfaction for hungry human hearts (Nos. III, IV, XII, XVI). They are all sprung from the

loins of Sākya-muni and embody his compassionate spirit. He is, much more than many scholars realise, the living core of his religion. It is this, more even than its attractive moral ideal (Nos. XXVI-XXX) which makes the Mahāyāna so effective a religion, and where some of its philosophers have taken it out into the barren ways of nihilism others have always appeared to bring it back to the Middle Path, to the sanity of the Founder, and to the concept of his Eternal Presence. Such are the unknown authors of *The Awakening of Faith* (Nos. XX, XXI, XXIII) and of the *Avatamsaka*—reconciling works which hold that all is transient yet not unreal because in all the Buddha dwells (Nos. VI-IX). For them the Supreme Reality is the indwelling Tathatā.

To this pantheistic realism the Mahāyāna had developed before it left India. In China it produced other great schools which are here only hinted at: the Dhyāna or Chan school of the sixth century A.D. sought to simplify the religion by teaching that the Buddha is within the heart rather than in books and images, and this Chan Buddhism became the Zen of Japan, and has had a far-reaching influence on the civilisation of both countries (Nos. XLV-XLVI). The sixth century also saw the attempt of Chi-i to harmonise the various schools by an ingenious but quite fanciful arrangement of the books according to

periods in the life of Sākyamuni, who, he claimed, had given men truth as they were able to bear it. His school is represented by the Tendai-shū of Japan, which places its main emphasis on the "Lotus." A third Chinese school of far-reaching influence is the Mantra school here represented by the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* and by Kūkai (No. XXXIV), who introduced it to Japan as the Shingon-shū. It also uses most of the scriptures represented here; and Japanese Buddhism is further illustrated by passages from its most popular scripture, the "Lotus" (Nos. I-V), and from the three famous scriptures which the Prince Regent Shōtoku made the basis in the seventh century for a new and splendid civilisation (Nos. XXX-XXXI). The schools to-day most powerful in Japan are Jōdōshū, Shinshū, and Nichirenshū, which claim about three-quarters of all Japanese Buddhists, and their founders are represented by Nos. XXXV-XLIV. They were all hymn-writers, and their hymns are perhaps best rendered in rhyming verse, like that of our Western hymnology, which they resemble in their central theme, the Divine Grace.

I hope this little anthology, which seeks to cover a vast ground and to illuminate great epochs<sup>1</sup> in however slight a way, will encourage

<sup>1</sup> It may perhaps be used as a companion to my larger book *Epochs in Buddhist History* (CHICAGO UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1924).

students and travellers to seek acquaintance with Buddhism in the Far East, where it has done so much to build a great civilisation in the past, and where it still has a notable part to play. That there is so much in these pages which resembles Christian teaching is surely an encouragement to all who believe in the brotherhood of man and in the Fatherhood of God.

My friend Dr. M. Anesaki and I had planned a larger anthology of Mahāyāna Buddhism. But the earthquake in Japan destroyed my manuscript, and set him to the immense task of rebuilding the library of the University of Tokyo. I am, therefore, publishing this little work without the great advantage of his collaboration.

I dedicate it to him with sincere friendship.

K. J. S.

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*April 1924.*

## EDITORIAL NOTE

THE object of the Editors of this series is a very definite one. They desire above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West—the old world of Thought and the new of Action. In this endeavour, and in their own sphere, they are but followers of the highest example in the land. They are confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour.

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# LOTUSES OF THE MAHĀYĀNA

## I

### SEEDS OF THE MAHĀYĀNA IN THE PĀLI CANON

ALL that we are is fathered and fashioned by our thought.—*Dhammapada*, 1.

Most men, O disciples, are believers in being or in not being: they are realists or nihilists. That all exists—this is one extreme. That nothing exists—this is another. Avoiding these two extremes, the Blessed One preaches a Middle Path.—*Samyutta Nikāya*, XII, 15.

All the means available as grounds for right conduct are not worth a sixteenth part of the liberation of the heart through love. That outshines them all in radiance and absorbs them into itself.—*Itivuttaka*.

He who sees me sees the truth.—*Itivuttaka*, 92.  
This is the title of the Tathāgata—his body



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is a body of the truth—*Dharmakāya*.—*Dīgha Nikāya*, 27.

He that would wait upon Me let him wait upon the sick brethren.—*Majjhima Nikāya*, VIII, 6.

Whoso shall turn to Me with faith and love shall reach one of the heavenly worlds.—*Ibid.*

. . . He, the all-wise God of gods.—*Theragāthā*, CCXXXIII.

These brief extracts from the Pāli books may suffice to indicate that there were present germs not only of the later philosophical developments of the Mahāyāna, but of its emphasis upon the Bodhisattva, or loving servant, rather than on the Arhat, or solitary recluse, and of its deification of the Buddha as Lord of lords, through faith in whom rebirth in Paradise was attained.



## II

### THE ESSENCE OF THE UPANISHADS: THE SOIL ON WHICH THEY FELL

#### *Reality*

FROM the unreal lead me to the real,  
From darkness lead me to light,  
From death lead me to immortality.

*Bṛihadāraṇyaka*, I, iii, 28.

As threads come from the spider forth,  
As sparks come from the fire,  
So from this Soul come forth all energy,  
All worlds, all gods, all things created.  
The mystic name of which is this :

Reality.

*Bṛihadāraṇyaka*, II, i, 20.

#### *The One behind the Many*

Him who is the supreme, Mighty Lord of lords,  
The supreme God of gods,  
The sovran Ruler of rulers, paramount,  
Him let us know as the adorable God, Lord of  
the world.

The One God who, as a spider  
 With his web, covers Himself,  
 Pervading all, the Inner Soul of all,  
 The overseer of deeds, in all abiding,  
 The witness, the sole seer, indescribable.

The one controller of the inert many,  
 Who multiplies His seed :  
 Wise are they who perceive Him in themselves :  
 They, and no others, win eternal bliss.

*Svetāsvatara*, VI, 7, 10, 11, 12.

Nor being nor non-being—the Kindly One,  
 He alone is the Imperishable.  
 Of Him is no likeness : His Name is Glory.

*Svetāsvatara*, IV, 18, 19.

“ *Invisible, we view Thee* ”

Beyond the darkness I know Him the great Spirit,  
 shining as the sun :

Knowing Him is immortality : that only is the  
 Path by which men escape Death :

Naught is there so high, so great, so small, so  
 powerful.

As a tree He standeth in the heavens firmly  
 rooted :

His Spirit filleth all the universe.

Without form, sorrowless is the Supreme :

Knowing this man escapeth Death ; knowing it  
 not he cometh utterly to grief.

THE ESSENCE OF THE UPANISHADS 23

Pervading all things, He dwelleth within ; He  
the Lord whose countenance is in all places, the  
gracious One whose presence is everywhere.

Within the heart, as the heart and mind conceive  
Him, dwelleth He the inward soul of all.

To know this is Immortality. . . .

Himself, void of sensation, He revealeth in all  
senses, Lord of all, of all Ruler and Refuge. . . .

Handless He holdeth, footless He speedeth :

Eyeless seeth He, earless He heareth. Knowing  
all, Himself unknown ; yet known of man as  
the First, the great Spirit. . . .

Yea, I know Him ageless ancient of days,

All-soul pervading all things, birthless, eternal.

He is God who lendeth hues to all this manifold  
world ; the Beginning of all, the End in  
which all things dissolve. May He give us  
understanding !

Thou art the Fire, the Sun, the Wind, the Moon :  
the Bright One, the creative Spirit. Man art  
Thou, and Woman ; boy and maiden ; Thou  
the aged tottering on staff : Thou comest  
again to birth and gazest here and there. . . .  
Sole warder standest Thou over every womb,  
bounteous, worshipful, God in whom all  
beginneth and endeth. In seeing Thee man  
cometh to unchanging Peace.

May He . . . endow us with blessed under-  
standing.

*Svetāsvatara*, III, 8 . . . IV, 4.

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*One the Source of Many*

As the sun illumines and shines upon  
All regions, above, below, east and west ;  
So that One God, glorious, adorable,  
Rules all things created.

The Source of all, self-evolving,  
Who ripens whatever can be ripened,  
And who distributes all qualities—  
Over this whole world rules the One.

*Svetāsvatara, V, 4, 5.*

*The One is Brahman*

Brahman, indeed, is this immortal :  
Before, behind, to right and to left,  
Stretched forth above, below,  
Brahman indeed is this wide world.

*Mundaka, II, 2 : 11.*

*Brahman is Atman*

From Him all seas and mountains come,  
From Him all rivers rolling on,  
From Him all herbs, and that one Soul—  
Essence of all that dwells within.

He on whom the sky, the earth, the atmosphere  
Are woven, and the mind, with all life-breaths,  
Him alone know as the one Soul (Atman). Other  
Names dismiss. He is the bridge to immortality.

*Mundaka, II, 1 : 9, 2 : 5.*

*"I am Brahman"*

Verily in the beginning this world was Brahman,  
One alone.

It knew only itself "I am Brahman." Therefore  
it became the All.

Whoever of the gods awoke to this, he indeed  
became it.

So in the case of seers and men. Whoever thus  
knows "I am Brahman" becomes this All.

*Bṛihadāraṇyaka, I, 4.*

In these few extracts we see the kind of soil  
upon which the seed of early Buddhism fell—  
a monistic pantheism with theistic elements.  
The Mahāyāna is the almost inevitable harvest.

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### III

## THE ESSENCE OF MAHĀYĀNA

### I. THE IMITATION OF BUDDHA

ANY Bodhisattva who after the Nirvāna of the Blessed One would set forth His teachings, should first enter the abode of the Blessed One and put on His robe and sit in His seat. The abode of the Blessed One is abiding in love to all beings; His robe is delighting in great patience; and His seat is the grasping of the doctrine of the Void.—*Saddharma-pundarīka Sūtra* (c. first century A.D.).

The "Lotus of the True Law" is the most popular of Mahāyāna scriptures—"the crown-jewel of the Sūtras." It aims at relating the historic Sākyamuni to the eternal order, teaching that he is Father, Supreme Spirit, Creator, Destroyer, Great Physician.

Its date is about the end of the first century A.D., and it was translated into Chinese about A.D. 300. A good analysis will be found in Dr. Anesaki's *Nichiren* and a rather cumbrous translation by Kern in vol. xxi. of the "Sacred Books of the East." The following extracts



give some idea of its main teachings. They are based upon Kern's version.

## II. THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY

It is as though a man born blind who sees not the sun, the moon, and the stars should say in his darkness, "There is no world of things." But a great physician, moved with compassion, goes to the Himalayas and after earnest seeking finds four plants: with these he treats the blind man in various ways, first making him swallow a decoction, then a powder, and then inoculating him with the extract of herbs. So he begins to see, and beholding the sun, the moon, and the stars, knows that he spoke before in ignorance. Thus do ignorant, blind folk go from birth to birth, knowing not the law of causality nor the origin of suffering. Into this darkling world appears the Most Wise, the great compassionate Physician. And as a skilled teacher who shows forth the True Law by stages: revealing to the most advanced supreme enlightenment; to those of moderate attainments the middling enlightenment of the solitary Buddha; and to the Arhat and recluse a still lower enlightenment. —*Ibid.*, V, 54.

The triple world is My domain, and all in it are My sons. They are in a house on fire: and I, set upon saving them, warn them of its evils.

But they will not listen. . . . Therefore I use wise strategy, and tell them of the three vehicles. —*Ibid.*, III, 87.

The three vehicles referred to in these passages are those of the Srāvaka, or solitary learner, of the Pratyeka Buddha, or solitary Buddha, and of the full Buddha who preaches to others. The central purpose of the Lotus Sūtra is to show that the three are really one.

### III. THE COMPASSIONATE AVALOKITESVARA <sup>1</sup>

"Why, Lord, is the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara so called?"

"All the untold myriads who suffer in this world will find release as they hear His name. From fire . . . from shipwreck . . . from the death penalty . . . from goblins and giants . . . from fetters and chains . . . from enemies and robbers . . . from evil passion and hatred and infatuation—from all these shall they be set free at the name of Avalokitesvara.

"If women desire sons let them adore Him, and they shall give birth to lovely sons with the root of merit in them; if they desire daughters they shall give birth to lovely and beloved girls, with the root of merit in them. Such is the power of the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva Avalokitesvara." —*Saddharma-pundarīka Sūtra*, XXIV, *passim*.

<sup>1</sup> I.e. The Lord who looks (in pity) on the world: it is translated into Chinese as Kwan-she-yin, and this appears in Japanese as Kwannon.



IV. A HYMN TO ĀVALOKITEŚVARA

O thou whose eyes are clear and kind,  
 Whose loving eyes reveal a loving mind,  
 Lord of the lovely face, beloved eyes !  
 O pure and shining one,  
 Radiant as the great sun,  
 Radiant as fire Thou dost arise,  
 Illumining our darkling sight  
 To drive away the mists of night.  
 Thy rain divine doth quench our fire,  
 Thy law doth banish our desire :  
 Rejoicing in compassion, lo  
 Our refuge, Thou, from every foe !

*Ibid.*, XXIV, 23.

The "Lotus" contains, as these extracts show, alternating prose passages and *gāthās*, or hymns. In this and other ways it resembles the Apocalypse of the New Testament.

V. THE REWARDS OF FAITH

*All are destined to Buddhahood*

- If men build stupas in brick or clay—even if they  
 pile up heaps of dust in mountain or forest  
 with devotion :
- If little children, as they play, make mounds of  
 sand in honour of the Jinas . . . all these  
 enter into Enlightenment.
- If on painted walls they set out figures of the  
 Blessed Ones well and truly painted or

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cause painters to portray them—such too become partakers of Enlightenment.

All, even boys who in sport have made images of iron or wood—or sounded cymbals and drums, or sung melodies to the Blessed Ones—all these become Buddhas in this world. . . .

Even they who offer a single flower . . . or join the palms in worship but once, or make but one bow before a stupa, or cry once, "Glory to the Buddha" with wandering mind—even such enter into Enlightenment.

*Yet the Monk has still his place*

Let the monk live apart and pure, doing his duties: let him shun kings and princes.

Let him hold no converse with courtier, or out-caste, with drunkard or heretic:

Let him pay no court to the proud, but rather to the disciplined. . . .

Let him shun Jains and giggling chattering nuns, and lay-sisters who are incontinent . . . matrons and maids . . . butchers, panders, dancers, fencers, wrestlers and all such folk.

Let him preach to women, but not jest with them.

*Saddharma-pundarīka Sūtra, 47-48.*

VI. THE BUDDHA TRANSCENDENT AND IMMANENT

Lo! the Lord Buddha on his Lion Throne

Dwells in each particle of sand and stone.

*Avatamsaka Sūtra (second century, A.D.).*

THE ESSENCE OF MAHĀYĀNA 31

Translated into Chinese between A.D. 317-420, this Sūtra was probably written during the early second century A.D. It forms a link between the Paradise and Philosophical schools of Mahāyāna.

These renderings are based upon a translation appearing in "The Eastern Buddhist."

VII. "O WORLD INVISIBLE, WE VIEW THEE"

Incomprehensible His *Dharmakāya*,  
Incomparable, intangible and viewless ;  
Yet for the sake of erring sinful beings  
In human form, a Teacher, lo He cometh !

Incomprehensible at times His *Dharma*,  
At times the Buddhahood of all He showeth :  
To yearning hearts His message He unfoldeth  
With loving tact and skilful adaptation.

Himself to perfect Buddhahood attaining  
At times the chosen few alone He saveth,  
Or swift as thought again delivereth  
A multitude of souls whom none may number.

To yearning hearts throughout the boundless  
spaces

Soundeth the Buddha's voice melodious,  
Yea, to all bounds of space and time it soundeth  
And every strategy of grace exhausteth.

*Avatamsaka Sūtra.*

The *Avatamsaka Sūtra* consists of a series of hymns of praise by attendant Bodhisattvas and

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others in honour of the Buddha, who is discovered seated in deep trance. Light issues from every pore of His skin illuminating the ten regions of the universe, and in each object on which His light falls He is Himself reflected. The central idea, which is rather difficult to grasp, is that of interpenetration, "one in all and all in one," or of mutual interdependence :

In everyparticle of dust throughout the universe  
We see the power of great Vairochana.  
In every speck dwell Buddhas without number,  
World upon worlds sublime, immense, revealing—  
And all within one thought of ours conceived.

### VIII. IMMANENCE AND INCARNATION

The Blessed One sustaineth all indwelling,  
Yet is He oft for sinful men incarnate.  
Unnumbered are His deeds of lovingkindness,  
The ocean of His gracious vows o'erfloweth.

Darkened, infatuate men forge their bondage,  
Arrogant and reckless into folly plunging—  
To them the Blessed One serenely preacheth,  
And all to holiness and joy restoreth.

He is our Refuge, unsurpassed and peerless,  
Our sin and suffering far He putteth from us.  
If sinners seek to meet Him, lo, He cometh !  
Like the clear moon o'er mountain dark arising.  
*Ibid.*

IX. NON-DUALITY

(*A Song of Mañjuśrī*)

All things in one and one in all,  
Unreal do they pass and fall.  
This path of "oneness" shall ye tread  
Ye who would free yourselves of dread.

Freed from the snare of "I" and "mine,"  
Ye shall attain to power divine :  
Bursting the bonds of unreality  
The hidden heart of Truth ye'll see.

*Ibid.*

X. REPENTANCE

Whoso repenteth as the Law doth bid,  
His earthly sins uprooteth utterly ;  
As fire in the last days will all consume,  
From mountain peak to ocean's widest bounds.

Repentance burneth up the fuel of lust,  
Repentance leadeth sinners on to heaven :  
Repentance doth the bliss of Dhyāna give,  
Repentance doth the soul of man enrich.

Repentance 'stablisheth the holy life,  
Yea, leadeth on to everlasting bliss :  
It freeth from the prison of this world,  
And maketh bloom the flower of Buddhahood.

*Mahāyāna-Mūlajāta-Hrdayabhūmi-dhyāna  
Sūtra (after D. T. Suzuki).*

## XI. THE BUDDHA'S SUFFERING LOVE

Age after age in myriad forms  
 His deeds of virtue He hath wrought ;  
 Salvation free His suffering love  
 For all things 'neath the sun hath bought.

*Avatamsaka Sūtra.*

We may compare with this conception of a long series of sacrificial lives the comment of the orthodox Buddhaghosha in the fifth century A.D.

"More than the ocean has He shed of His blood,  
 More than the stars has He given of His eyes."

We may also compare the well-known *jātakas* of Vessantara and others who gave their bodies for mankind ; very popular in the Far East is the story of Sadaprārudita, who gave himself to feed a hungry tigress and her litter. (No. XVIII.)

XII. "WHERE THE WICKED CEASE FROM  
TROUBLING"

Queen Vaidehi, chief consort of King Bimbisara, grieved beyond endurance by the conduct of her unnatural son who has imprisoned his father, comes to the Buddha on the Vulture Peak, and speaks as follows :

"My only prayer, World-honoured One, is this : tell me of a world where there is no sorrow and pain, whither I may flee from this world of



evil where the wicked abound. Let me not hear, I pray Thee, the voice of the wicked any more, let me not set eyes upon them. . . . May the Sunlike Buddha enlighten me."

Then the World-honoured One flashed from his brow a golden ray, and illuminated the innumerable worlds of the ten regions, resplendent and lovely, that the queen might take her choice. She chose the realm of the Buddha Amitāyus, the Land of Bliss, Sukhāvātī.

"O Vaidehi," said the World-honoured One, "knowest thou not that Amitāyus is not far from thee? Do thou apply thy mind to such as have wrought out the good deeds that lead to rebirth in his Paradise. They who would go thither must cultivate a threefold goodness. First they must act with filial piety and support their parents; they must serve and respect teachers and elders; of compassionate mind, let them harm none, but keep the ten precepts. Second, let them observe the vows, taking refuge in the Three Jewels; let them honour all moral precepts, and act with dignity in the ceremonial of worship. Third, let them give their whole mind to the attainment of Perfect Wisdom, put steadfast faith in causality, study and recite Mahāyāna scriptures, and lead others to join them. . . . Again, O queen, thou art but an ordinary person endowed with poor intelligence, yet all beings not born blind can see the setting

sun. Take thy seat, therefore, looking to the west and set thy mind to meditate upon the sun when it is about to set, and hangs like a drum in the heavens. Then let its image remain clear and fixed, whether thine eyes are open or shut. . . ." Such is the First Meditation.

Meditations on water, ice, lapis lazuli, and fourteen others follow, which lead to the vision of the Buddhas of the ten regions, and especially of Amitāyus and his attendant Bodhisattvas, Avalokitesvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, the embodiments of Compassion and of Might.

The queen and her women attain to these visions and to full Enlightenment.—*Amitāyurdhyānā Sūtra*, 5, 10 (first or second century A.D.).

### XIII. THE LAND OF BLISS

The Sukhāvati of the blessed Amitābha is prosperous, rich, delectable, fertile, lovely, and thronged with gods and men. No hells are there, no brutes nor ghosts nor untimely births. . . . It is fragrant, adorned with jewel-trees, and resounds with the song of sweet-voiced birds. Its trees are of gold and silver, of crystal and coral, of pearl and diamond. . . . Vast lotus flowers abound, and from each there spread rays of light innumerable. There flow great rivers murmuring sweet music, and heavenly instruments take up the lovely sound, deep, clear, delightful,



unwearying as though they murmured "transient, unreal, full of peace." . . . Nowhere is there in that Land of Bliss any sound of sin, sorrow, affliction, or destruction. It is above pleasure and pain : therefore it is called Sukhāvātī, the Land of Bliss.—*Larger Sukhāvātī Vyūha*, 16 . . . 19 *passim* (first or second century, A.D.).

These two works, both translated in vol. xlix. of the "Sacred Books of the East," which is here followed, belong to the popular Paradise Mahāyāna of about the first century A.D., which entered China in A.D. 170 and has played a very large part in popularising Buddhism in the Far East. Amidst much that is childish they voice the cry of human hearts for a heavenly city.

#### XIV. HOPE FOR THE SINNER

If there be any sinner, guilty even of the five deadly sins, perverse and criminal and deserving to suffer here and hereafter for many ages, and if at the hour of death he meet a good and learned teacher who seeks to console and hearten him by preaching the excellent Law, and teaching him to call to mind the Blessed One: yet, maybe, wracked with pain, he cannot compass it. Then some good friend may say to him, "Even if thou canst not call the Blessed One to mind at least do thou utter the name of Buddha Amitāyus."

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This let him do serenely and forthwith, repeating ten times "Hail, Buddha Amitāyus," and remembering Him. Thus will he expiate, at every repetition of the Name, the sins which lead to rebirth during eighty million æons. And as he dies he shall see a golden lotus like the sun, and in a moment shall be reborn in the land of Highest Bliss. After twelve æons the lotus will open, and straightway Avalokitesvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, lifting their voices in compassion, will set forth the doctrine of reality and the way of expiation. Then will he rejoice and straightway direct his thought to the attainment of Bodhi.—*Ibid.*

#### XV.—THE SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DHARMAKĀYA

When Bodhisattvas think of the Dharmakāya how shall they picture Him? They shall think of the Dharmakāya by picturing the seven marks which are His essential functions and virtues. Let them think of His free and unimpaired activity manifest in all beings; of the eternity of His perfect virtue; of His perfect impartiality; of those free activities which ever spring from His will; of the inexhaustible riches, material and spiritual, which are stored in Him; of His intellectual and equitable purity, and lastly of His earthly manifestations for the salvation of all; for the Tathāgatas are the express image of the

Dharmakāya.—*General Treatise of Asanga and Vasubandhu.*

These great schoolmen of the University of Nālandā lived in the fourth or fifth century A.D.

XVI. THE GRACE OF AMBITĀBHA

Exalted One, to Thee I pray  
Whose beams the regions ten illumine.  
In Thee, Tathāgata, I trust,  
Grant me Thine ever-ready aid.  
O give me birth in Thy Pure Land,  
Which now in vision I behold ;  
Free as the air embracing all,  
Its confines are beyond our ken.  
From Thine own merit grows the store  
Of charity incomparable,  
And like the radiance of the moon  
Thy light encompasses us all.  
O may we all be born again  
With Thee ; like Thee, the Truth proclaim !  
I pray that I may see Thee, Lord,  
That I and all men by Thy grace  
May to Thy Land of Bliss attain.

*Amitāyus Sūtrapadesa* (fourth or fifth  
century A.D.).

This commentary by Vasubandhu has won for him the title of "Second Founder" of the Paradise Mahāyāna, Nāgārjuna being the first.

## XVII. THE IMPARTIAL LAW

On her bosom the one Mother Earth  
 Embraceth many kinds of plants,  
 And knoweth no favourites :  
 The universal sun serene in heaven  
 Illumining the regions of space  
 Sheddeth impartial light :  
 In one wide ocean all rivers  
 Are salted to one salt taste :  
 The dragon king, with thunder and lightning,  
 Sendeth universal rain on all :  
 The moon shineth in high heaven  
 And is seen by all on earth,  
 Yea, her glory reacheth all :  
 Elemental fire, being one,  
 Burneth all things equally ;  
 So is it with the Buddha Law :  
 Impartial it seeth all alike.

*Kāśyapa parivarta* (after D. T. Suzuki).<sup>1</sup>

The *Kāśyapa parivarta* is a part of the *Mahā-ratnakuta Sūtra*, a collection arranged by Bodhiruci in A.D. 713. He translated twenty-five of these stanzas and added them to those already in existence. The translator of the above stanza is unknown, but it is described as spoken to an assembly of the faithful at the request of the Bodhisattva Samantaprabha.

The similes used in it are common in Mahāyāna

<sup>1</sup> *Outlines of the Mahāyāna*.

Buddhism, and elaborate the ideas of the "Lotus" scripture.

### XVIII. THE HUNGRY TIGRESS

In former lives the Bodhisattva showed selfless love to all creatures. To him then, our Lord, must we pay utter devotion. Once the Bodhisattva, who has of his compassion given such grace unto men, was born in a Brahman family of great distinction, learning, and devotion to duty. As a youth he became a master in the arts and sciences, and obtained great wealth and renown. But he took no pleasure in worldly things, and after a while retired as an ascetic to the jungle.

He was wandering one day with a disciple in the mountains, and came upon a young tigress maddened with hunger and about to devour her own young who trustfully nuzzled her, seeking milk. The Bodhisattva trembled at the sight. As the king of mountains rocks in an earthquake so was he moved with compassion. Unshaken by the greatest personal grief, the compassionate quail at another's woe. The Bodhisattva sent his disciple to find meat; for he was resolved to hurl himself down the cliff and give his body to the tigress and her cubs. Of what worth is this transient life save to help others? So he pondered, determined to give an example, to shame self-seekers, to point the way of salvation, and



to reach supreme enlightenment himself. "Not for fame, nor seeking heavenly joys; not for my own eternal weal, but for others do I act. May it be mine to dispel sorrow, and to bring salvation, as the sun brings light and casts out darkness." He spoke, and straightway hurled himself down the cliff. And the tiger leapt upon him with a growl. . . . When the disciple found them he uttered words of veneration, and gods and men strewed flowers and jewels upon the bones.—Abridged from the *Jātakamāla* of Āryasūra (fourth century A.D.).

The *Jātakamālas*, of which there are several, are garlands of birth-stories such as this, designed to set forth the compassionate love of the Bodhisattva, who through many ages built up an abundant stock of merit for mankind.

#### XIX. FROM THE UNREAL TO THE REAL

##### *Adoration to the All-Wise!*

Thus have I heard. Once the Blessed One was dwelling at the Vulture Peak near Rājagriha, attended by a company of monks and Bodhisattvas. Seated thus He became absorbed in a meditation known as Deep Enlightenment. Then too the great Bodhisattva Aryavalolitesvara was practising the deep Prajñā-pāramitā, and he perceived that the five constituents of being are empty, and so was saved from misery and suffer-

ing. "O Sāriputra" he cried, "material form is emptiness, and emptiness is material form. So is it with the other skandhas; all are empty—sensation, consciousness, and others, all are empty. They are not born nor are they destroyed; they are not tainted nor untainted; they neither increase nor decrease . . . there is therefore neither ignorance nor wisdom, no birth nor age nor death, no suffering, no path of escape from suffering, no attainment, nor anything to be attained. The bodhisattva who relies on this Prajñā-pāramitā frees his mind of obstruction; and because he has no obstruction he is freed from fear, and goes beyond perverted and unreal thoughts to final Nirvāṇa. All Buddhas, past, present, and future, reach perfect wisdom depending upon this Prajñā-pāramitā. Therefore do we know that it is a great and heavenly mantra, a peerless mantra, which puts aside all suffering. This is the mantra to be used: *Gate, gate, paragate, parasamgate, bodhi, svaha!*—*Prajñāpāramitā-hri-daya Sūtra* (third century A.D.).

This famous Sūtra is used by all Mahāyānists, though not one in a million understands its meaning. It is, as its name says, the Heart Sūtra of the Prajñā-pāramitā, which sets forth the doctrine of the Void, or Sūnyatā. The essence of this doctrine is that there is an ultimate Reality compared with which all things are empty. This Absolute is ineffable and indescribable, and



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therefore it is described in a series of negatives. The Mādhyamaka school is based upon this Sūtra, and may be described as transcendentalism verging at times upon nihilism. The Mantra school uses this philosophy as a mystic formula, and claims that it has great potency.

### XX. THE ULTIMATE REALITY

There are two aspects of *Tathatā*—Reality. First its truth seen as the Void, *Sūnyatā*—for it is without the attributes of phenomenal things: it is the One Reality (itself void of attributes). Second, its truth seen as the Positive (*Asūnyatā*) for it is self-existent, and full of merit.—“*Awakening of Faith*” (c. fourth century A.D.).

NOTE.—The meaning of this important passage is that the *Tathatā* or Absolute is *Sūnyā* (empty) because it transcends experience: it is *Asūnyā* (not-empty) because it is the self-existent womb from which all good actions spring.

The key to these mysteries of Buddhist transcendentalists is to be found in their mystic experience. They have experienced something ineffable and sublime: like the seers of the Upanishads they cry, *Neti, neti* (Not so, not so), for it is beyond human categories.

### XXI. WHAT IS THE MAHĀYĀNA ?

It is the principle of all things phenomenal

and transcendent by which we can discern the essence of Mahāyāna.

It has a threefold significance. First, it is great in its essential being, because its essence exists in all things as their Norm, unchanging in the pure and in the impure, ever the same, neither waxing nor waning, and without distinction.

Second, it is great in its attributes. The Tathāgatagarbha (womb of the Buddha) teems with infinite and innumerable merits—these are its attributes.

Third, it is great in its activity, for it produces every kind of good in the world, phenomenal and transcendent.

It is the Great Vehicle, for in it all the Buddhas have ridden, and Bodhisattvas riding in it enter Buddhahood.—*The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*, Section II (after D. T. Suzuki).

This great book, usually attributed to Asva-ghośa (first century A.D.), belongs probably to a much later date, and aims at reconciling the transcendentalism of the *Mādhyamaka* and the subjective idealism of the *Yogācāra*.

## XXII. FAITH

Faith is the guide, the womb, the guardian, the begetter and the cherisher of all virtues.  
Expelling lust, bridging the stream, Faith shows to us the City of Bliss.

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Faith is the calm of pure thought: rooted in honour, freed from pride.

Faith is the foot on which we go to find great treasure, the hand with which we grasp happiness.

Faith gives gladness even in self-denial. Faith gives delight in the Law of the Victor.

Faith gives the pre-eminence in knowledge of virtue: it guides and crowns the Buddha with victory.

Faith is a power unto keenness and clearness of morality, keeping the five great qualities from extinction.

Unconquerable by passion, Faith seeks out the noble traits of Buddhahood.

Unattached to carnal joys, delivered from evil, Faith is the truest and only joy.

Faith goes beyond the realm of Mara, and reveals the way to Deliverance.

Faith is the seed and root of virtues, Faith nourishes the tree of Wisdom, Faith increases the joys of knowledge.

Faith it is which reveals the Victorious Ones.

They who put faith in Buddha leave not the Way of Virtue. . . .

They who put faith in the Dhamma thirst after knowledge of the Victorious Ones, and aspire to their incomparable traits. . . .

They who put Faith in the Sangha . . . will

never fall from the strength of the true way.

*Ratnolka Dhārani* (after Bendall and Rouse).

### XXIII. FAITH

What is Faith? How is it to be exercised? There are four aspects of Faith. First, to believe and rejoice in Reality (*Tathatā*). Second, to believe in the Buddha as the encompasser of infinite merits, to worship Him joyfully, to make offerings to him, to His gospel, to discipline oneself according to His law, to aspire after supreme insight. Third, to believe in the *Dharma* as the root of merit, to rejoice always in practising its perfections. Fourth, to believe in the *Sangha* as embodying true morality, to make willing gifts to the congregation of Bodhisattvas, and to practise sincerely all deeds helpful both to others and to oneself.

Faith is brought to perfection by practising *dāna* (liberality), *sīla* (right actions), *kṣanti* (fortitude), *virya* (energy), and *saṁathā* (equable tranquillity) — *Awakening of Faith*, Section IV (after D. T. Suzuki).

The following passage shows that the Mahāyāna did not at once throw overboard the old idea of merit when it launched the ship of Faith: "If there be any sinner, yea even one guilty of the five deadly sins . . . and he dying repeat the

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words 'Praise to Buddha Amitāyu' ten times without pause and with unflagging attention . . . he will by the merit of this deed expiate at every utterance of it sins whose punishment is rebirth through eight millions of æons.—*Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra*.

But in the end it arrives at this paradox : Even the righteous find salvation ; how much more the sinning soul ?—*Tannisho*.

### XXIV. HAIL, GLADDENING LIGHT

O wonderful ! The sun arises, and all the world is lighted. So wakes the mind to Truth, and men benighted in error see its brightness, and adore the pure form of the Blessed One. . . . In each of the rays that stream from Him are seated countless Buddhas, who with powers inexhaustible deliver sentient things.—*Avatamsaka Sūtra*.

### XXV. THE ACQUISITIVE SOCIETY

Whenever strife ariseth amongst men the sense of possession is to blame. Therefore let a man leave any place where he is tempted to covetousness. The world is his who has rid himself of craving.—*Anantamukha*.

Even as when a tree is cut at the root all its twigs and leaves wither and die : so all evil passions are brought to naught by destroying the root—falsehood of separate existence.—*Tathāgataḡyha Sūtra* (third century A.D.).



XXVI. THE BODHISATTVA

Our great and loving Mother Earth  
 Impartial is to all her sons :  
 So doth the Bodhisattva crave  
 And toil all living things to save  
 As on from strength to strength he runs.  
 No favour doth he seek or give,  
 Embracing freely all that live.  
     So too the kind, impartial rain  
     Doth feed and nourish herb and tree  
     Until all grow luxuriantly :  
     Nor favour showeth anyone.  
     So Bodhisattvas lovingly  
     All creatures cherish 'neath the sun.

The sun with kindly tempered heat  
 Matures and ripens rice and wheat,  
 Nor favour seeks nor shows.  
 So too the Bodhisattva glows  
 And warms all beings with his fire,  
 Nor doth a recompense desire.  
     Impartial too the gifts of air  
     Pervading, spreading everywhere.  
     E'en so with all-embracing skill  
     The Bodhisattva preaches, till  
     The Buddha's children all attain  
     The goal and end of birth and pain.  
*Kāśyapa Parivarta Sūtra* (after D. T.  
 Suzuki).

XXVII. THE WAY OF THE BODHISATTVA

“How shall I seek the goal to gain  
While others live in fear and pain ?  
Should I this self of mine preserve  
And fail those other selves to serve ? ”

O thou that wouldst that goal attain  
And find for all the end of pain—  
Make firm the root of Faith within,  
Set thine own mind the Light to win.

“Myself how shall I best attend ? ”  
By cleaving to the Supreme Friend.

When once thy frame is wholly clean  
And pure as rice from speck or taint,  
It will produce enjoyment keen  
For other beings, selfless saint.

“What means to purify this frame ? ”  
To purge it from all sin and blame,  
The Buddha's Word we'll follow well  
Or find ourselves in throes of hell.

The Word of Buddha seek to know  
And study in tranquillity.  
Up ! To thy forest shelter go,  
And contemplate Impurity.



Enjoyment pure how shalt thou gain  
Till all thy life is free from stain ?

*Sikshāsammucaya*, Kārikās 1, 2 (seventh century A.D., after Bendall and Rouse).

### XXVIII. TRUE HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

“How may I best increase my body’s weal ?”  
Put from thee sloth and put upon thee zeal.  
Give, and great joy thou shalt possess,  
Fruit of compassion, and of “emptiness.”

*Sikshāsammuccaya*, Kārikās 12 . . . 23.

### XXIX. SOME VOWS OF THE BODHISATTVA

May there be no root of good in me, no knowledge of right, no cunning or skill save such as serve all livings things.—*Gaganaganja Sūtra*.

In giving is the true enlightenment.—*Ratnamegha*.

With mind unbending as the Earth with all her load ; keen as a diamond in its resolution ; unruffled as the heavens ; uncomplaining as a good servant ; yea, a very sweeper in its utter humility ; with mind like a wagon, bearing heavy loads ; like a ship unwearied in voyaging ; like a good son beholding the face of his true friend. So, my son, call thou thyself the patient, thy Friend call thou Physician : his precepts do thou call medicine, and thy good deeds the putting of

disease to flight. Call thyself Coward, thy Friend call Hero, his words of counsel thine armoury, and thine own good deeds the routing of the foe.—*Ganda Vyūha*.

It is such trusty friends who counsel us against evil, who keep us from apathy, who drive us out from the City of Samsāra.—*Ibid*.

The above are all taken from the *Sikshāsammuccaya* of Santideva, a great seventh-century teacher in the University of Nālandā. It is an anthology of 27 Kārikās, or verses with prose comments and parallels—and forms an excellent compendium of the Mādhyamaka school. It is described as “set forth for the discipline of Bodhisattvas.” (See Bendall and Rouse: Murray’s Indian Texts, London, 1922.)

### XXX. SERVANTS—ABOVE GOOD AND EVIL

When disease is rife these high ones become medicine for healing and for happiness of men.

When famine is abroad they become food and drink; dispelling hunger and thirst, they preach the Law to all.

In time of war they are intent upon compassion, and persuade millions to do no hurt.

Impartial in the midst of strife, they smile upon reconciliation—these mighty Bodhisattvas.

Whatsoever hells there be—thither they set their faces for good of men.

In the worlds of animals they are known preaching the Law ; therefore are they called Guides.

Amongst those sunk in sensual pleasures they disport themselves : where men sit in meditation they meditate : and destroy Māra and leave him no entry. As a lotus exists not in fire, even so they show that there is no lust, no meditation. Yea, as courtesans they entice men, and catching them with the hook and bait of lust establish them in Buddha wisdom.

For the good of the world they become all things to all men. . . .—*Vimālakīrtinidēsa Sūtra*, 325-6 (c. third century A.D.).

First translated into Chinese by C' Chien about A.D. 250 and by Dharmaraksha about A.D. 290-300, this famous little book was chosen by Prince Shōtoku of Japan as one of the three Buddhist Scriptures upon which to found a great civilisation. It sets forth not only the compelling example of the Bodhisattva, but shows that laymen like Vimāla and like Shōtoku himself can be good Buddhists.

### XXXI. THE REFUGE OF THE LAW

All aspirations of the Bodhisattvas, countless as Ganges sands, are comprehended in the great aspiration—taking refuge in the Law. . . .

This acceptance of the Law, even though feeble, causes woe and consternation to Māra, the Evil

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One—just as, O queen, a slight blow in a vital part gives pain and suffering to a mighty man.

As Sumeru, monarch of mountains, shines supreme in height and stretches out surpassing all, so, when a follower of the Mahāyāna accepts the Law without reserve and cares not for life and limb—this act of faith outweighs all good principles of those followers who are niggardly and cautious as they set out upon the Great Way.—*Srimāla devī Simhanāda* (third century A.D.).

It is famous as one of the three Sūtras chosen by Shōtoku as an example to queen and people, and is known in Japan as *Shoman-gyō*.

XXXII. WHAT I HAVE I GAVE

O Bodhisattvas, freely give  
Your bodies, all that ye possess !  
Your store of merit share with all ;  
So shall ye guard your holiness.  
*Sikshāsammucaya, Kārika 4.*

XXXIII. COMPASSION TO ALL THINGS

The morning-glory to the well rope clings ;  
I seek my water from the distant springs.  
*From the Japanese.*

XXXIV. MUCH LEARNING—LITTLE WISDOM

Old scrolls of Scripture, row on row,  
Fivescore, a hundred score, we know !

Profound, profound past human ken  
 Their teachings manifold we pen.  
 What boots this toil of scribe and sage  
 While wisdom hides within the page ?  
 Self yet unknowable remains :  
 It thinks and thinks, nor wisdom gains.  
 Mad, mad are beings here forlorn,  
 Yet know they not their madness :  
 Blind, blind are sentient creatures all  
 Yet know not they their blindness.  
 Again, again, they are reborn  
 To darkness and to sadness :  
 Again, again, they pass and die  
 Blinded by sense eternally !

Kūkai, A.D. 774 (after M. Anesaki).

Kūkai's pantheism, or mystical "cosmotheism,"  
 is well illustrated by the following :

The Buddhas in innumerable Buddha-lands  
 Are but the cosmic Buddha in our hearts :  
 The golden lotuses countless as the drops  
 In ocean are our own corporeal frame.  
 Each work of art the cosmic life reveals  
 Each mystic syllable a myriad formulæ.

From such mysticism the step to magic is a  
 short one : and Kūkai was described by the  
 impatient Nichiren (who had his own mystico-  
 magical formulæ) as "the prize liar of  
 Japan !"



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These translations from Japanese hymns (xxxiv-vi) (xli, xliv) are after M. Anesaki, whose *Quelques Pages de l'Histoire Religieuse du Japon* I have with his permission used.

XXXV. "SUN OF MY SOUL"

The haze of morning veils the light of day  
Or grudging filters some faint golden ray :  
But lo ! behind the shrouding veil of mist  
The whole world by the Sun himself is kissed.

On every side his beams the world pervade :  
His grace forsakes not one who calls for aid.

In all this world no tiniest hamlet lies  
On which the moon casts not her witcheries :  
But when the peasant flings his casement  
wide  
The Light of Heaven comes and dwells inside.  
Hōnen Shonin, A.D. 1133-1212.

XXXVI. "MORS IANUA VITÆ"

What though these fragile bodies melt away  
Like dew, when Death hath laid us low—  
Our souls abide, and in a gladder day  
Meet in the Lotus-bed where all shall grow.

*Id.*

XXXVII. " HERE WE HAVE NO ABIDING CITY "

In this poor Inn of Life and Death  
We stay in fear and doubt :  
Till to Nirvāna's City Faith  
Doth lead us safely out.

*Id.*

XXXVIII. LIFE, LIGHT, AND LOVE

Eternal Life, Eternal Light !  
Hail to Thee, Wisdom Infinite,  
Hail to Thee, Mercy shining clear,  
And limitless as is the air.  
Thou givest sight unto the blind,  
Thou sheddest mercy on mankind.  
Hail, gladdening Light,  
Hail, generous Might,  
Whose peace is round us like the sea,  
And bathes us in infinity.

Shinran, A.D. 1175-1265.

XXXIX. IN PRAISE OF HŌNEN

What though great teachers led the way—  
Genshin and Zendō of Cathay—  
Did Hōnen not the truth declare  
How should we far-off sinners fare  
In this degenerate, evil day ?

*Id.*



## XL. AMITĀBHA

In such hymns Shinran developed the teaching of the Amitābha books, such as the following famous passage of the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra* : "At the point of death if thou canst not practise the remembrance of Buddha thou mayest utter the name Amitābha, and, repeating the words 'Hail, Amitābha,' shalt expiate the sins which bring rebirth through endless time."

This famous vow of Amitābha is known as the "King of Vows" : "I will not accept Buddhahood if all who with sincere faith desire to be reborn in my Paradise are not to enter it. If all men save deadly sinners may not enter it—I will not enter Buddhahood."—*Sukhāvatt Vyūha*, 8919.

## XLI. "WHEN I AWAKE I AM STILL WITH THEE"

Alas ! we may not meet Him face to face !

Yet is He with us all in every place.

Lo ! in the mystic stillness of the dawn

When no man stirreth is the vision born.

Nichiren, A.D. 1222-82.

Nichiren, prophet, visionary, iconoclast—is the most striking figure in Japanese Buddhism. The few poems of his which are here translated will reveal him also as mystic : in the midst of loneliness and persecution he was sustained by his

sense of a Divine Mission from the eternal Sākya-muni with whom, as the Bodhisattva Visistacaritra, he had sat upon the Vulture Peak, and whose full teachings he found in the "Lotus." This he interpreted according to his own arbitrary genius.

XLII. HE YET LIVETH

A mirage was the smoke of Shaka's pyre  
That seemed at Kusināra to arise :  
Death could not bind Him, nor might fire  
Destroy the Teacher of such verities.

Hark, he yet liveth, and doth speak  
Eternal wisdom from the Vulture Peak.

*Id.*

XLIII. FALSE APPEARANCES

"That bamboo looks just like a boat"  
Ponders the fool who sees it float.  
'Twould be of less than no avail  
In such a fragile bark to sail !

*Id.*

XLIV. COME, WIND OF TRUTH

The night wind drives aslant<sup>1</sup> the rain :  
Hark, how it strikes the window-pane !  
So evil thwarts the will of heaven,  
As raindrops from their course are driven.

<sup>1</sup> The word translated "aslant" also means crooked, evil.

60 LOTUSES OF THE MAHĀYĀNA

The eagle cleaves the mountain wind ;  
So words from the Eternal Mind  
Of Buddha fall athwart our strife,  
And drive away the ills of life.

Masses of fog and thickening cloud  
Wrap close about me like a shroud.  
Eternal from the Vulture Peak  
Whence still the Buddha's voice doth speak  
Come, Wind of Truth, drive error out  
As morning puts the night to rout.

*Id.*

XLV. THE BUDDHA WITHIN

I have a Buddha image ; yea,  
Though eye may see it not !  
Nor made of cloth or clay  
Nor carved in wood I wot.  
'Tis not by artist drawn  
No thief it steals :  
One from Time's very dawn  
Itself reveals  
In myriad form—  
This Buddha Norm.

*Zen Gaku No Ten.*

XLVI. INTUITION

A score of years I sought for light  
Passed many a spring and fall :

But since the peach-bloom came in sight  
I nothing doubt at all.

*Ling Yun.*

XLVII. CONFESSION OF SHINRAN

What though in faith my way I wend  
To that pure Land of Thine,  
If all my flesh doth falsehood blend,  
And in my soul no spark of Truth  
No wholesome light doth shine !  
Too strong, too strong earth's clinging mesh,  
My soul entangled lies :  
My very deeds of righteousness  
Cry falsehood to the skies,  
And poison, as a serpent's tooth  
Gnaws this poor heart of mine !

What though my spirit, steeped in shame,  
Unmerciful and fickle be,  
Yet by the virtue of His Name  
And trusting in His Ark of Love,  
I cross the waves of misery.  
All impotent as is my might,  
My heart though cold and dead,  
Yet by His Grace, His Saving Light,  
Through me on darkling souls is shed  
Enkindled from above.

Shinran Shonin.

This confession is from the *Wasan*, or Hymns of  
Shinran, the Japanese Buddhist Wesley, who

purified Buddhism from the last shreds of reliance upon merit as taught by his master Hōnen, and insisted that salvation was by faith, and by faith alone. Insisting further that if Amitābha is our Father, as is taught in the Paradise Sūtras, His servants should make the home rather than the monastery the centre of religion, he married, and taught his fellow-priests to marry. He is thus the Luther as well as the Wesley of Japanese Buddhism.

A free translation of his hymns is found in *Buddhist Psalms*, edited by S. Yamabe and L. Adams Beck, "Wisdom of the East," Murray, 1921 (xxxviii, xxxix are adapted from them).

#### XLVIII. A LILY OF THE GUTTER

Out of the slime blooms the lotus serene—  
Steadfast my heart though my life is unclean.

#### XLIX. THE RECLUSE OF LOVE

Not yet my body dons her sable weed :  
My lonely heart herself a nun indeed !  
My hair unshorn, my heart is yet a nun,  
And keeps her cloister till her vigil's done.

(After Lafcadio Hearn.)

#### L. AN EPITAPH ON THE SEASHORE

Like the wide waves encompassing  
Abounds the fullness of the Law !  
What blessed tidings brings each tide :

The winds the Ship of Mercy bring :  
How sweet to rest the sea beside !  
O endless surge of happiness,  
O winds and waves of bliss !

LI. "IF THE LIGHT BE DARKNESS. . . ." A  
DIALOGUE

"The light that in the moon doth shine  
Shineth in thee—her radiance thine !"

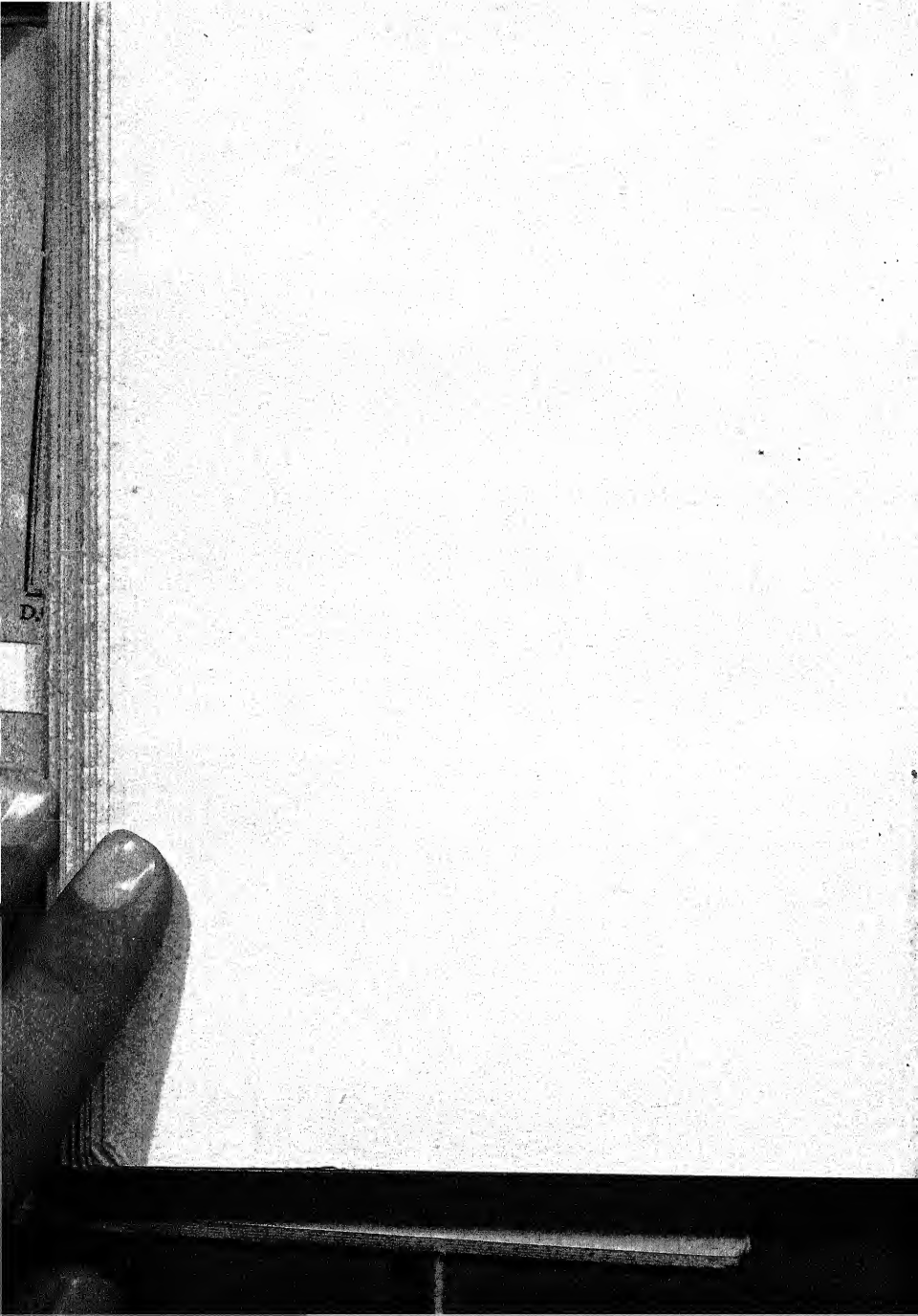
"The moon, thou say'st, shines in my mind!  
Darkness within is all I find !"

"Come, cleanse the mirror of thy mind, and soon  
'Twill shine with all the clearness of the moon."

As this anthology begins with the great truth  
that man's thoughts make his destiny, so it is  
fitting that it should end with this call to  
"cleanse the mirror of the mind."

Buddhism of whatever school is a way of en-  
lightenment.

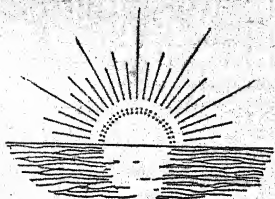






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